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ABSTRACT

The agenda for humanistic education in the 1980s needs to go beyond psychological concerns to address the political, social, ecological, and spiritual side of the human experience. The goals of humanistic education focus on the development of intelligence, self-understanding, interpersonal relationships, and a concept of physical health. Equally important concerns are the search for meaning in one's life and the discovery of one's higher self through intuition, imagination, and spiritual and mystical information. Items for the humanistic agenda include finding practical alternatives to the grading system; involving parents, industry, and society in the education of children; expanding the role of the teacher to include psychological counseling and guidance; devising criteria by which humanistic classroom activities may be determined to have substance; instituting an ethics component in every course in which humanistic education is taught; and searching for excellent classroom teachers to serve as models for student teachers. The content of humanistic education will involve teaching students to be comfortable with ambiguity and confusion, making mental health a goal of the schools, using the computer to address humanistic issues, teaching holistic wellness skills from kindergarten on, bringing a spiritual dimension back to education, and teaching children that they can create their own future. (KC)

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AT THE EDGES OF PERCEPTION: HUMANISTIC EDUCATION IN THE 80's AND BEYOND

April, 1983

(Invited Address by Dr. F. Hanoch McCarty to the Special Interest Group: Affective Education of the American Educational Research Association 1983 Annual Meeting at Montreal, Canada)

Introduction

I am about to embark on a description of how I see humanistic or affective education in the 80's and what I think the agenda must be as we look forward to the last years of the 20th century and on into the 21st. These remarks must necessarily be parochial in that I do not see myself as a spokesman for humanistic education in general nor have I conducted a comprehensive survey which might entitle me to speak knowledgeably about the current state of the profession. I do, however, in my capacity as a humanistic educator, teacher, and consultant, have the opportunity to travel widely around the U.S. and Canada, and my remarks have been formed by the impressions I've garnered through those interactions with educators on this continent. So while my remarks might be somewhat parochial, I hope they will be provocative and help to stimulate the dialogue which must go on if humanistic education is to grow stronger and deeper.

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There seems to be no general agreement as to where humanistic education began. Was it in the writings of Vico, Pestalozzi, Rousseau, Dewey? Or earlier? No matter. For however we began, we began in reaction to the one-sidedness of the educational practices of the past: the view of man as depraved in the state of nature and as having original

sin; a reaction against the view of children as chattel to be abused at will; against the view of the learning process as rote learning and endless exposure to the "classics" as Olympian models.

And there has been much to react against. The history of the place of children in our world is a dismal one indeed. Although child abuse and incest are just becoming topics of allowable conversation and of public concern, historians tell us these problems have been with us for all of history. The McGuffey's Reader approach to academic content and the strict authoritarian teacher-dominated style of instruction were extremes which helped to bring about the birth of modern humanistic education. (It is sad to note that the media have carried news in recent months of school systems which have proudly returned to McGuffey and authoritarianism--as part of the back-to-basics backlash about which humanistic educators justifiably worry.)

Dickens began A Tale of Two Cities with the line, "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." That line, I think, most truly expresses where our field is today. For we have, in reaction to the sordid past, accomplished much improvement of the state of instruction. And we live in a time of expanding possibilities when I believe our capability of more improvement and realization of potential may be almost limitless. This is true in large measure on our continent because of the incredible pluralism allowed in our society. Yet we also live in a time of the back-to-basics movement, which I see as a crying out on the part of the population for some return to "eternal verities" if only some can be found. While the media figures such as the Rev. Jerry Falwell garner

the headlines, let us not be confused by their singularity and thereby underestimate what they represent. I believe they represent not a demand for the narrowness of the 3 R's and a resurgence of Know-Nothing-ism, but an outpouring of concern that our national wheel has lost its axle, that we are without center, spinning out of control.

Humanistic education experienced its great surge of growth in the sixties at almost the same time that theologians were telling us that God is dead--a coincidence which is not accidental. We were looking for centeredness within; we were seeking inner-directedness and bravely willing to take responsibility onto ourselves. If, in fact, this approach had brought on a wonderful new world, there would not be the backlash that we see. Instead, for whatever reasons, the world does not, to many eyes, seem a better place. Drug abuse, divorce, war, the pleadings of the oppressed, terrorism, seem on the rise. The people are worried; looking for a place to fix the blame and, more importantly, a place to find some answers which don't confuse. Daniel Bell, in The Return of the Sacred, tells us that people seek

> A return to the continuity of the tradition of moral meaning; and a return to some mythic and mystical modes of thought in a world which science and positivism have deprived of the sense of wonder and mystery that man needs.

I do not blame humanistic education for the world's ills nor for those of our society. Indeed, I believe that we have actually done much good as I will elaborate later. But I do believe that we are also in Dickens' "worst of times" and that we must respond appropriately to the inchoate outpouring of concern from the so-called right wing of the population. For if we don't, we hand the power back to the demagogues and we abandon the greatest chance we've ever had.

We need to become active rather than reactive, preparing our own humanistic education agenda and implementing it in a coherent manner. It is my thesis that, while in no way attempting to limit the creativity of diversity, concerned humanistic educators ought to be banding together in a few robust organizations rather than a myriad of tiny ones, establishing on-going dialogues with regard to agenda, and organizing deliberate programs of implementation.

About the back-to-basics movement: It seems to me to be part of a cyclical pattern. Every 10 or 12 years we shift from experiments and loosening up--a tender education, to a conserving, "Johnny can't read" hand-wringing tightening up--a tough education.

We go from thesis to antithesis and each time reach a synthesis. In most cases, the synthesis seems to be a very diluted form of what we might want. We need to respond to that cyclical process by pulling out of it. We need to refrain from panic when the new fad comes through. We should take heart from a study of parental goals for education which indicated that

> ...parents typically want the fundamental skills of literacy, preparation for job and career satisfaction, intellectual skills necessary for independent judgement, understanding of our traditions and values, self-understanding, emotional and physical well-being and ethical character. (McIntire, p. 17)

I find it fascinating that, in this study parents were given lists of goals to sort into acceptance and rejection piles--and almost no parent rejected any school goal. The list of goals was completely consistent with what a humanistic educator would choose as well. The parents are not asking for the elimination of the humanistic concerns--they are

asking for balance. They would like education for human concerns in a context of educating for competence. We share the same agenda and we need to reforge an alliance with parents. One of the consistent failures of schools is the failure to both listen to and to re-educate parents. Parents suffer from an educational lag--it is 20 years since they went to school. The parent brings 20 year old perceptions and expectations to the school. We in humanistic education must be in the forefront of a movement to involve schools in the creation and strengthening of parent education programs which would help parents understand the changes which have taken place since they were students and which would enable parents to become partners in their children's learning by acquiring helping skills and familiarity with the curriculum. And the schools must learn to listen to what parents are saying and become sophisticated in finding out beneath what they are saying; what goals parents do have for their children. Education is one of the three largest purchases a citizen makes: a house, a car, an education for one's children. Yet the citizen has more choice and power over the first two decisions than over the last. We have to re-enfranchise the parents if we are to ever achieve a humanistic education for the children. We must secure the knowing cooperation of the parents.

In family network therapy it is recognized that the therapist cannot successfully treat the patient alone but must secure the active cooperation of the family, friends, and colleagues of the patient in order to help create a supportive world in which the patient can move toward health (and because one hour of therapy cannot prevail over 23

other hours each day spent in the toxic environment which produced the pathology). As in family net-work therapy, we in education must involve the parents and, indeed, the rest of society in the educative process in order to create safe suppor- tive environments for learning and growing. Art Combs tells us

> We are discovering that human behavior is only a symptom. The behavior of any of us at any moment is only a symptom of what's going on inside him. It follows then that if we are really going to produce effective changes in human beings, we must deal with how they are thinking, believing, valuing, loving, hating, desiring, aspiring. These things go on inside people. Historically, education has not dealt with such problems. Historically, we have dealt with the student as an object, an object that was to be molded. (p. 3)

Problems of Humanistic Education

For whatever reason, a devastating equation has come about in the minds of our colleagues: that humanistic education is the same as laissez-faire. The fatal phrases of the sixties and seventies were "Do your own thing" and, "If it feels good, do it." Humanistic education was seen as chaotic, formless, lacking standards, lacking a moral position, a set of common goals.

We must combat that perception. In order to do so, we have to assert that humanistic education believes in responsibility, in commitment, in the social contract and in the development of subject matter competence. "Do your own thing" must be modified to add, "as long as it does not rob others of their dignity and potential." As we are beginning to understand biological ecology--the interrelationship of species and environment--we must begin to understand--and teach about-- the human ecology--- the interrelationship of people and the effects that one person's choices have on another.

For a long time I was puzzled by the amount of anger and fierce resistance my humanistic teaching style and methods engendered in others. I was puzzled by the lack of a "middle"--that is to say, my students, colleagues, and supervisors either loved me or hated me--no one was indifferent to what I was trying to accomplish in the classroom. I remember a high school teacher colleague who, livid with fury, told me that one of his students had asked him, "Why can't we have fun in this class like Mr. McCarty's classes do?" His response was to insist that (1) fun couldn't possibly coexist with real learning and (2) I had to stop being so friendly with my students. My principal, in a marvelous mixed metaphor, told me "the teacher's desk is an unbridgable wall between you and the students."

Don't smile 'til Christmas, the novice teacher is told. Keep 'em in control. I had colleagues who came in, sat down at the desk, opened the text, and lectured. And gave endless tests, and snap quizzes, and used elaborate tables to figure grades from percentages and averages and curves. My movement around the room, my accessibility, my sharing some decision- making with the students brought me condemnation from all except my blessed department chairman. "I can't bring myself to teach as you do," he said, "but I'd like to."

Art Combs put it succinctly this way:

> I have gradually recognized the terrific political threat posed by a person-centered approach. The teacher has to face up to the fearful aspects of the shift of power and control from the teacher to the whole group of learners, including the former teacher, now a learner-facilitator. Giving away power seems terrifying to some. One person-centered teacher in a school constitutes a threat to every other teacher. (Rogers, p. 19)

Humanistic education must explore the nature of power-relationships and how to move them toward parity. Humanistic education is (1) a set of goals for students (what we'd like them to become as people); (2) a set of perceptions of the qualities of decent people; (3) a notion of the qualities necessary in a good teacher; (4) a set of ideas as to what good teaching is and isn't; and (5) a collection of agreed upon content--what we think is worth knowing. Each of these areas must be clearly delineated so that the profession will recognize that we have gone beyond the mere insistence on the the inclusion of the affective in curricula.

It has been said very often that humanistic education is identical to process education. That we are most concerned with how something is taught or learned rather than with what is taught or learned. If that was ever true, it is no longer the case. We must be concerned with content as well as process, finally realizing that content and process are inextricably intertwined. McLuhan taught us that "the medium is the message". A lesson on freedom taught in an authoritarian manner, for example, becomes an ironic parody. Humanistic education must be concerned with establishing congruence between method and content. And must be concerned with the moral and ethical appropriateness of the content. We must ask ourselves whether or not we are attempting to smooth out and make more palatable, interesting, effective, and involving, a curriculum which trains people to create bombs and PCB's. Ought we not also be raising questions about the value of creating and using such things?

In the words of Victor Frankl, "Freedom is in danger of degenerating into mere arbitrariness unless it is lived in terms of responsibilities" (Frankl, p. 209).

New Directions for Humanistic Education

Richard Curwin tells us

> Humanistic education has been thought of primarily as the ideal interaction between teacher and student, the process that recognizes and builds on the child's psychological concerns. (p. 33)

I believe that for humanistic education to meet the challenges of the future, it must go beyond the psychological concerns. It must address the political, the social, the ecological, the spiritual sides of man's experience.

Sidney Simon's brilliant lesson, IALAC, (I Am Loveable and Capable) teaches us that we need more than the affective dimension (or lovability)--we need capability. We need to become able to do things, to accomplish and to succeed. Of course humanistic education adds the affective to that skill-and-knowledge-orientation which the schools always had. But, in bringing in the affective, we must not de-emphasize the other domains as many see us as having done.

Humanistic education has succeeded far beyond our most optimistic expectations and it is the "other side" which tells us so. There would not be such hysteria among those who shrilly decry the "secular humanists" if our influence was minimal.

I believe that we have crept into America's consciousness--at the edge of perception. We are almost subliminal. You find affective questions at the end of chapters; humanistic activities suggested in curricula; affective goals in school handbooks and in memos from the Superintendent. We are very much in a position analogous to that of the black in America: 30 years ago, racists (and even people of apparent good will) told rac-

ist jokes with impunity, with the sure expectation that all would laugh heartily; today, racist and ethnic jokes are still told, but more tentatively, more nervously, with more thought about possible rejection by the audience. They are told in hushed tones, and some people are saying, "Hey, I don't like that kind of humor." Or, if they remain silent, they feel guilty at laughing. So blacks have come a long way in America. The prejudices remain, if somewhat eroded, but the perception of the unfairness of those prejudices has come into everyone's mind. And in certain places throughout the land, real progress is made. And the progress of blacks in America has, in important ways, slowed down, paused, as it has encountered white backlash. So it is with humanistic education. There are oases where we stand, free, proud, and celebrated, and those oases are growing. Yet those oases are surrounded by vast deserts seemingly barren of our influence. Yet I see, pushing up through the sand, the faint green tendrils of growth. Teachers and parents are increasingly aware of the importance of the inner life of children in the learning process. And daily this awareness becomes translated into expections for behavior, for curricula, for teaching methods, for accomplishment. Humanistic education, too, has suffered from a pause, a loss of its initial youthful momentum, as it has encountered "back-to-basics."

The back-to-basics folks, however, cannot win in the sense of eradicating hu- manistic education's influence from the schools. They cannot win, first, because the schools have never left the basics; second, because the ba- sics are too narrow a curriculum for any but the early primary grades; and third, because the back-to-basics folks already share with us many of

the same concerns for children; and we could accomplish so much if we would realize this and begin listening to these people without rancor and begin putting what we do in language what they use and understand.

Take a moment to think what the three most important lessons you have ever learned in your life at any time were. Really do this now. (Pause.) Now ask yourself how many of these lessons were learned in school? For how many of them were you at least adequately prepared in school? When I ask the questions of my students, as I have for years, the overwhelming number of responses I get are that few, if any, of those lessons were learned in school. Humanistic education, I think, is the deliberate attempt to reverse that statistic. To change the school's curriculum and methods so that, someday, when a group is asked that question, the majority will say, yes, school helped me with them.

These lessons usually have to do with affective concerns: feelings, beliefs, values, ethics, goals, desires, fears, relationships. They center around the issues which Gerald Weinstein of the University of Massachusetts calls "The Education of the Self." Weinstein states that the self is as legitimate a content as typing, math, or chemistry. Or to quote Stephen Bailey's marvelous book, The Purposes of Education:

> Surely the educational system has no higher function than to help people to have creative engagements with the world of the free self. For if the world of the free self is appropriately cultivated, its felicitous admixture of playfulness, concentration, and socializing can affect, infect, and help to liberate the worlds of work and coping. The free self then becomes not a mere segment of existence, but a quality of existence. (Bailey, p. 61.)

One of the tasks which humanistic education must address if it is to survive the attacks of the new right is that of establishing some standards as to what constitutes humanistic education and what does not.

Is every technique acceptable? And are there ways of implementing lessons which are more humanistic than others?

Some examples come to mind: on Saturday morning, as children are being assaulted by the usual violent, amoral and stereotype-filled cartoons, comes a breath of fresh air called "Snippets." These mini-cartoons offer some exploration of self-concept and of values issues. Yet one of them begins with a song, "The most important person in the whole wide world is you and you hardly even know it!" I find this to be incredibly irresponsible. Certainly we'd like kids to feel good about themselves, but do we want them to have no sense of perspective, of interdependence? I would like my children to have a firm sense of self-worth but not become self-centered, conceited, egotistical. These are the kind of excesses which are exploited by the opponents of affective education.

Another example is the practitioner of values clarificatin who tells his/her students that any answer they give is equally right; that any value they hold is equally true. Does that person mean that if a child values murder, war, rape, and theft, it is equally right compared to charitableness, social commitment, concern for the environment? Now, values clarification tells us that we must take a stance with our students to accept without judgment what students say in order to (1) not to alienate them or prevent a useful relationship from developing with them and (2) in order to not foist upon them our own values thus creating a sort of "groupthink" situation. Yet the adept values clarifier does know that VC does have a moral position, a set of beliefs about what is desir-

able in the world, in short--a code of ethics and morals. It is the intent of VC to help students develop ethics and morals, not merely to explore and validate their amorality or confusion.

So humanistic education wants to expand freedom of choice in values within a definable spectrum of acceptability. It ought not to take the position that is value-free. We ought to stand for something and involve ourselves in the never-to-be-completed ongoing hot debate over just what the limits of that spectrum ought to be.

Welch, Medeiros, and Tate tell us that the four goals of humanistic education are:

1. the development of intelligence
2. the development of self-understanding
3. the development of satisfying interpersonal relationships
4. the development of a concept of physical health.

Fantini and Weinstein, in their very important monograph, Making Urban Schools Work, describe clearly an excellent traditional school curriculum and the complementary nature of the humanistic curriculum organized around three basic human needs: the search for identity, the search for connectedness, and the search for power. Identity is the seeking of uniqueness, self-knowledge, and that great revolutionary idea of humanistic education: that self-worth is learned. Connectedness is the seeking of one's place in the family, the group, the society, the world, and in relationships. Power is the search for ability, potency, hope, and competence, and the self concept which depends on those issues.

To these I would add:

1. the search for meaning in one's life

2. the discovery of one's higher self--the issues raised by transpersonal psychology: intuition, imagination, the psychic world of spiritual and mystical information.

One of the problems of humanistic education seems to be that many people seem to confuse it with mere humane-ness. Humanistic education needs to be humane, of course, but much humane education is not humanistic. Humanistic education, to my mind, is marked by the goal of helping the student to transcend his dependence on the teacher--the goal of self-directedness leading to independence, and hopefully later to interdependence.

For humanistic education to succeed, we must concentrate on teacher training. There is an appalling lack of preparation on the part of teachers. Many non-humanistic teachers are not anti-humanistic; they are merely unaware of the alternative. There is a hierarchy. At its lowest are the inhumane teachers. Then there are the neutral ones, those who focus on subject matter and are neither warm nor cold to their students. Then come the humane ones; those who are warm and caring but at the same time may be controlling and limiting. These last two are our best bet in terms of recruitment to the ranks of the highest level: the humanistic teacher. Most humanistic educators are those who were humane but disorganized or unclear about the reasons for their pedagogical choices. As they struggled toward clarity of purpose, philosophy, and method, they crossed the line and became truly humanistic.

Many of the warm and even neutral teachers espouse the most wonderful goals and concerns for kids and yet continue to use embarrassment, emo-

tional appeal, corporal punishment, and other dark-age horrors in their teaching. In the graduate program which I direct at CSU (a humanistic education masters), corporal punishment is a continual item of debate. It is very hard for some of our students to consider giving it up--even while embracing a humanistic philosophy and becoming adept practitioners of such affective methodology. Silberman, in Crisis in the Classroom, described much of American education as being characterized by "mindlessness." I am afraid that that indictment probably still stands, in general, while we do make inroads in specific limited locales. Our inroad is that guilt may now be experienced by many teachers using such suspect techniques, and we can exploit that guilt to encourage them to change. We can reach out to them and offer them not "assertive discipline" with its teacher-dominated classroom orientation but humanistic discipline with its emphasis on the development of inner controls and empathy for others.

I would propose a definition of a good teacher as "healthy adult with children." I think that from that can flow all other qualities we might want to have in a teacher. Those of us in education long enough have gotten to know teachers who have subject matter competency and even some with ability to get that subject matter across, yet who lacks some basic human qualities such as empathy, warmth, caring, or insight. In fact, most of us have worked with teachers who seem to be in need of psychological help. Ask any caring administrator and that person will tell you of tenured teachers with major mental problems and the difficulties, often insurmountable, that he or she faces in dealing with them--torn between

responsibility to the hurting person in front of them and the children whom that teacher is hurting every day.

Some years back, the New York City sanitation men's union fought a long strike for certain benefits. Of course they were asking for more money, but the key demand was for free psychological care for themselves and their immediate families. They won that strike. If the sanitation workers could get such a benefit, why not teachers, who work in so psychologically sensitive and demanding a job?

I think that eventually, therapy or some kind of counseling ought to become one of the requirements of teacher preparation, just as undergoing long-term therapy is a requirement in some psychological fields. A teacher is a practical psychologist--a person who on a daily basis affects the emotional well-being of many young people. The self-understanding that that would bring about would go a long way toward humanizing the schools. I believe that many pedagogical decisions supported by elaborate rationales and justifications are, at the core, projections of the teacher's unmet psychological and social needs. As teachers undergoing therapy or other personal growth experience develop a clearer understanding of their own personality dynamics, this connection would emerge and become easier to confront. In addition, most of us go through certain life-changing events--a divorce, a death in the family. These events shake us, cause us to lose for a time our centeredness and perspective. Psychological help ought to be available for teachers as their need requires.

It is interesting to me that major industries have recognized how much benefit they would reap in terms of productivity, creativity, loyalty, and reduced absenteeism from instituting drug abuse or alcohol abuse programs and from providing mental health services. The schools have been much slower to recognize these potential benefits. Few schools have instituted such programs. More often the chemical abuse programs are aimed solely at the students rather than at the staff as well.

The Teachers Role Develops

Nash and Ducharme, in a brilliant article in The Teachers College Record, suggest that the traditional teacher role will eventually give way to what they call the "human service educator."

> A human service educator is foremost an effective teacher--at various times functioning as a counselor, a human rights activist, a political ombudsman, a stimulator of human potential, and a group organizer. Whether through subject matter, human relations skills, a specific technology . . ., a human service educator is able to help people discover and use more effective and satisfying means to improve themselves, their organizations, and other social institutions. (p.449)

Teachers have seen themselves as warriors against ignorance and inability, whose main task was to teach the basics--the most essential skills and packets of testable knowledge. The lament of every teacher is the phrase, "I don't have time to cover that." This cry is raised any time new curricular content is proposed. Like all excuses, it is true, at least on the surface. The curricula are packed with information, all seemingly useful, and time is short.

The world is, however, changing so rapidly that merely programming students with information cannot hope to be an education in the late 20th and early 21st centuries as it might have in the past. More teachers

will have to be helped to redefine their roles toward being guides in the process of knowing and as fellow explorers of the human inner world.

As a young high school student, sensitive to the meaning of language, I was struck by the irony that in the chemistry "experiment" book, the answers were in the back! An experiment cannot have pre-determined answers. It should have been called the chemistry exercise book. Teachers will have to leave the safety of easily predictable answers and join their students on the sometimes dangerous and always exciting and renewing journey of discovery.

This suggests to me that burnout plays a role in curriculum. We get burnt out partly from endless repetition. The first year I covered a topic I brought my excitement and my creativity to it. It was new for me, and I was new to it. That was infectious. You see, I was a learner, too. The fifth year, I noticed yawns as I covered that same material. I used the same excellent lesson I'd written five years before, the lesson which had had such excited response from the class. Why were these kids so turned off now? I could blame the victim and intone, "Kids today just have no discipline, or respect, etc." Or I could recognize that my deadness is what I saw reflected in them. So I think that humanistic education has to call for continual renewal in curriculum and in teaching assignments. Invite teachers to change the grade level they teach, or the building they are in, or which novel is to be taught this year--and some of that precious electricity returns.

Summary

Some items for the humanistic agenda with regard to good teaching:

1. We must confront the grading system. Even the NEA condemned report cards, yet we still have them--and probably will continue to have them. We are returning to conventional grading rather than progressing in this area. Grading seems to me to be the servant of the employer economy. It was once a device employers used to rapidly differentiate between aplicants. Yet if we survey employers today, they would tell us that the grades no longer have the meaning they used to and that employers must use other measures to find out about applicants.

Grading is another way to communicate with parents who are justifiably concerned about their children's progress. Yet parents are often confused by grades. We must look long and hard at this issue--seeking a system of reporting which does not alienate the learners; which does not stereotype them or lock them into a failure orientation. We must lead the way in finding practical alternatives and in educating the parents and the public so that they will be able to use the new system comfortably.

2. We must renegotiate the contract with parents, industry, and society about the responsibility for education. Too long have the schools been a dumping off ground, a babysitter, stuck with the total job of educating the young. The parents must be re-involved. Schools must set up "human libraries" of available adults in each community who will either come in to the schools to teach their special skills or invite students out for meaningful instruction in the real world--and I don't mean

field trips--I mean a return to the best part of the old apprentice system--that of real-life workplace experience as a part of society's economy. We have to train willing parents in how to support their children's learning. Many schools have begun doing these things yet such programs remain in their infancy. The interface between school and society is what we must reform. The walls between must be broken down deliberately.

3. We must blur the distinction between teachers and therapists and psychologists and guidance counselors. Courses such as "The Teacher as Counselor" now available in a few places must be proliferated. The teacher must be helped to see himself or herself as a practical psychologist and the business of education as being at least partly that of deliberate psychological education. We cannot tolerate it when teachers say, "I'm not supposed to be a therapist, I'm not an entertainer, I teach math." "No, you don't teach math, you teach children," we must reply. The reading teachers have long had a slogan, "Every teacher should be a reading teacher." We must appropriate that idea. Every teacher is a teacher of psychological health.

4. We have to confront the fact that many humanistic exercises are merely precious rather than helpful. Many are cute, gimmicky, and potentially dangerous. Humanistic classroom strategies are much more dangerous than any other kind because they are psychological. The literature is replete with attacks on the invasion of privacy and horror stories of psychological damage done by apparently well-meaning teachers using such techniques. We should devise criteria by which we can determine that such activities have substance, are addressing important issues which are

appropriate to the students' needs, level of maturity and interests, and are being conducted by well-trained persons. One of the criteria should be that of follow-through. I don't know how many times I have seen activities with no debriefing, with little or no opportunity for the participants to be helped to make sense and meaning out of the experience. Humanistic activities ought to be articulated--connected meaningfully to what has gone before and to what will follow.

5. We need an effective ethics component to be instituted in every course and program where humanistic education is taught. I have seen psychological information and technology abused endlessly. How shall a sociogram be conducted? How shall its results be used? How can children be helped to keep their right to privacy? Are children of certain ages even capable of using their right to not answer when you give it to them?

6. The humanistic education professor knows that what he/she tells the student teachers is contradicted by their experience in the public schools. The research seems to indicate that the most potent force in determining a new teacher's style is his/her cooperating teacher and the ambiance of their first school. If we are to make a difference in training new teachers, we have to give them a clear idea of how to gain and hold a well-ordered classroom--humanistically--and help them do enough advance planning so that they can cope with the demands of the real world school. One of the best ways to do this is to search for excellent classroom teachers as models and to focus much of our energy on interacting with them; re-training them; helping them sharpen their humanistic skills.

Teachers, especially humanistic ones, require support, both professional and personal. Teachers can be lonely people, indeed, since most of their working day is spent interacting with and guiding children, usually with very few opportunities for interacting with other adults.

We must be active in building a movement to help create teacher-led and operated support groups in every school. At Cleveland State University, our Graduate Program for Teachers of Emerging Adolescents has used school support teams, and support groups within the graduate classes, as a major feature with rather dramatic success. (McCarty,1983)

When considering humanistic content, I would suggest the following list of topics for consideration:

1. We must teach about ambiguity. The world is ambiguous and uncertain. Some questions have answers, and when they do, it is comforting, but most questions do not have clear answers or solutions. We often have a great urge to look for the answer. Many questions have a number of correct or partly correct answers. I think that we have to begin helping people become comfortable with ambiguity.

2. Coming from that is the need to teach people to be comfortable with confusion. Confusion is the beginning of the learning process. If we become comfortable with confusion, we can tolerate it long enough to seek appropriate solutions rather than rushing to the first available solution to lower our anxiety. Students should be helped to tolerate confusion and to see it as a natural step in their learning.

3. We need to make mental health a goal of the schools; a goal which is fully acted upon. If it were acted upon, we would not have school

psychologists whose caseload is too large for meaningful contact with individuals and small groups and whose job description seems to be that of test administrator.

4. We need to teach about humanizing technology, about using our new toy, the computer, to address human issues. We have to help students see that sometimes the servant becomes the master; that the technology which we invent to help us often beecomes that which controls us.

5. We need to teach holistic high level wellness skills from kindergarten on. For example, when we teach children about diet, do we help parents learn to buy, cook, and live with healthier foods? We need to teach about life-style issues which affect health.

6. We need to bring a spiritual dimension back to education. The separation of church and state which is the law in the U.S. leads people to say that there is no G-d in the schools. (Which is not true, assuming you believe in an omnipotent diety,--G-d's presence can not be excluded merely be- cause organized religion is.) I am <u>not</u> calling for the establishment of religion in the schools. I <u>am</u> calling for the exploration, recognition, celebration, and validation of man's essential spirituality in our educative process. My soul, my spirit must be allowed in the classroom. This is the most dangerous and politically explosive topic. It needs sensitivity. I do not have the answers as to how it should be done. I do know that it <u>must</u> be done. Allan Howard said,

> We have not been able to achieve all that we had hoped to achieve.Our children will, perhaps. They may find the solution to problems of living together that we never found. They may be able to avoid the mistakes we made. But they will not be able to do so unless we can

> give them some better conception of themselves than that of a "higher animal." We must be able to give them theassurance of the unconquerable human spirit; but we first have to discover it ourselves. No pious, sentimental reference to it will do; no dogmatic or traditional reiterations. They have to be able to see in the kind of people we are, in the way we deal with knowledge itself, that we speak and act out of the knowing human spirit. (pp.343-4)

It is not that we have barred G-d from our schools; no, G-d is there; it is that we have prevented our souls from reaching out any higher presence; we have barred soul from education. How can an education be humanistic which denies the highest aspirations of our spirit?

The spiritual is explored through art and music. Yet these are not major subjects in America -- indeed are often seen as frills to be cut back in economy drives.

The spiritual is explored by encouraging students to talk about their own experiences, beliefs, and family customs in religious expression.

The spirit is explored by exercises which utilized deliberate intuition training, fantasy, creative visualization, psychosynthesis, imagery, meditation.

I believe that it is possible to venture into these areas, carefully and sensitively, by involving parents, community leaders, clergy, <u>without</u> creating an established religion and without infringing on the rights of children.

7. We must teach children that they have the power to create a future for themselves. Sidney Simon teaches his students to say, about anything which happens in their lives, "I created it; I promoted it, or I allowed it." He teaches people to accept responsibility, total responsibility for their lives, and in doing so, makes them powerful

indeed. To learn that each of my acts and of my refusals to act inexorably creates my future is to become powerful. We must teach that the locus of control of our lives is inside us.

8. We must strive to create classrooms in which tears of joy and of sadness can be shed unashamedly.

Conclusion

To conclude, humanistic education must, as it looks to its future, face a huge agenda.

1. We must strive for legitimacy through creating verifiable objectives and conduct many longitudinal follow-up studies to confirm the impact of our strategies.

2. We need to further develop the body of research, carefully constructed, which firmly supports the notion that humanistic education enhances the learning of the basics and that it has demonstrably positive effects on students lives. We also need to make that research very visible to the profession at large. Toward that end, John Swisher of Pennsylvania State University is conducting a major review of research in this area, sponsored by the Association for Humanistic Education and Development of the APGA and by the Association for Humanistic Education.

3. We must fight our tendency to dichotomized thinking, adversarial thinking, of categorizing into "us versus them" constructions. In Aikido, one is taught not to have opponents but to see others as partners with us--if our partner's energy is positive we both have positive outcomes; if it is negative, our partner experiences his own negativity. We must learn to listen to our critics--they have something to tell us.

They are telling us to correct our extremes, and they are telling us that they and their children have needs we have not addressed sufficiently.

We must dissociate ourselves from secular humanism, existential humanism, atheist humanism--no matter how valid the historical connection. Our goals do overlap, but we, as educators, have important and highly individual goals and purposes which differ markedly with those of the afore-mentioned philosophies.

You have noticed, I am sure, my use of the word "humanistic" as interchangeable with "affective." I think that both have become red-flag words, and we must work hard at either restoring to them some measure of public and professional acceptance or finding a new name for our field which has no similar negative history and associations.

We must face the facts of the world: that we will have imperfect schools; pluralistic, incredibly variable in quality and purpose. We will have a similar percentage of poorly trained people; of people of ill-will, of lazy thinkers. In the 19th century a philosophy called carpe diem became popular in England. Carpe diem means "to seize the day." The idea was to do the tasks today which are put in front of you to do; tomorrow's tasks will come all on their own without our help. It meant not to be overwhelmed by the global enormity of the problem but to bite off the chunk you can deal with and deal with it. We would do well to embrace that idea. We have a huge task in front of us. There has always been a large gap between the show goals of any school as listed in their curricula and their real goals as represented by their actual lesson plans and their rules and policies. We are to help schools close

that gap, for their goals are so often humanistic ones while their practices are not.

We have to seize the day. This list which I have presented to you today of items on the humanistic agenda for the immediate future is too big for any one of us to accomplish or to even attempt. I suggest that each of us choose that chunk for which our past experience has shaped us; that piece which our soul tells us fits us or sings to us, and do it. And we should join together in a humanistic association, such as the Special Interest Group of the AERA, the Association for Humanistic Education and Development of the APGA, and especially, the Association for Humanistic Education. We should join together to share these tasks, to share the progress of our work on them, and to give each other the loving support which the stress of this mission will make indispensable.

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